

REPORT (PART II)
ON
NATIVE-OWNED ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS IN BENGAL
FOR THE
Week ending Saturday, 13th December 1902.

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II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a. —Police.

1657. *The Weekly Chronicle* (Assam) brings to light the facts of a case in which a man complained that in his absence from home, his wife had been murdered by a planter, named A. G. Lander, of the Kekragol Tea Estate. The journal complains that, in the first place, as directed by the Government of India's Circular orders for the conduct of cases in which there is reason to suspect that a native has met his death at the hands of a European, the prosecution was not entrusted to competent hands, and that when the body was exhumed it was in a very advanced state of decomposition rendering *post mortem* examination impossible. In this condition, instead of the examination being made at Karimganj, the body was sent all the way to Sylhet for the Civil Surgeon to perform the examination, although it was known that that officer was not in the station and could not do so. The Assistant Surgeon who performed the examination deposed that it was impossible to say what caused the death, owing to the vital organs being disorganised by decomposition, but the Civil Surgeon, who countersigned the report, without seeing the body, asserted that all the vital organs, including the spleen, were found unruptured. Finally, the journal complains that Mr. Lander, the accused, was examined on oath by the Deputy Commissioner—a procedure most unique.

WEEKLY CHRONICLE,
2nd Dec. 1902.

1658. *The Bengalee* considers the District Superintendents of the Bengal Police and Superintendents of the Calcutta Police good for nothing, ill-educated or half-educated men, with little or no real worth, who are ignorant of the manners, customs and language of the people, and who will not conform to the Government orders impressing upon them the necessity of mixing and making themselves acquainted with the people amongst whom they work. It is only reason and commonsense that these men should be replaced by better and more qualified men, and the sooner this is done the better.

BENGALIEE,
6th Dec. 1902.

1659. *Power and Guardian* points out the corruption prevailing in the Calcutta Police by which some of the best intentions of the Legislature are frustrated. Liquor-shops are permitted to do a roaring business within the prohibited hours simply because the police is in the pay of the shop-keepers. Rain-gambling flourishes galore during the season in spite of the immediate presence of constables of police who are paid by the gambling-house keepers to say nothing about it. In the mufassal, too, as in Calcutta, it is popularly believed that the one object which an investigating officer will aim at is to fill his pockets out of the affair, the true investigation of the crime forming but a secondary object. The journal is of opinion that unless the Police Commission makes an earnest attempt to ascertain facts, figures and opinions in respect of the matters described above and seriously deliberate upon them for the purpose of improving them, it will be laying itself open to the charge of neglecting its duty.

POWER AND GUARDIAN,
7th Dec. 1902.

1660. In the opinion of the *Indian Mirror* the Police Commission is frittering away its time by examining so many police officers and youthful civilians, men, who in their abysmal ignorance will, of course, declare that the police is not "all bad." The worthlessness of the police might be taken for granted, and the Commission might well confine its attention to a consideration of ways and means for its improvement, and if this is their real object, it should proceed to examine independent and competent witnesses; members of the Bar, both European and Indian, business men, planters and Missionaries. Some feeling of disappointment is felt by the *Mirror* at not finding any reference in the proceedings of the Commission to some of the glaring plague-spots in the police system. For instance, by far the greater number of subdivisions are in charge of Indian Deputy Magistrates who have much the same duties and responsibilities as regards the criminal administration of the *mufassal* subdivision as the District Magistrate himself has in regard to the *sadar* subdivision. Yet while the District Superintendent of Police himself looks upon the District Magistrate as his departmental superior, the meanest town *chaukidar* can afford to snap

INDIAN MIRROR
9th Dec. 1902.

his fingers in the face of the Indian Subdivisional Magistrate. Next, the thana Daroga's disinclination to stir out when complaints are made is another source whereby the cause of public peace and safety suffers in no small degree.

BEHAR HERALD,
10th Dec. 1902

1661. The *Behar Herald* ascribes the iniquity of the police to the combination in the Magistrate of the dual functions of Magistrate and police officer, and remarks that

Ibid.

in these circumstances the Police and Magistracy work together more for the purpose of shielding offenders, especially if they are police officers, than for detecting crime. For this reason complaints against the police are very rare and torture is practiced by the police more openly.

BENGALIEE,
10th Dec. 1902.

1662. The *Bengalee*, reverting to the subject of the aloofness and inaccessibility of District Superintendents of the Bengal Police and Superintendents of the Calcutta Police,

Ibid.

describes them as magnificent nonentities, a standing disgrace to the force to which they belong, who should be got rid of and replaced by men with special aptitudes and facilities for acquiring that thorough and perfect knowledge of the people which is so essential to the efficiency of the force and the success of their work. This brings the journal to the point which it has repeatedly urged, namely, the wider employment of educated natives of the country in the higher ranks of the Police Service. It now earnestly trusts the Police Commission will recommend this measure. Once this is secured, the *Bengalee* is sure that the Indian Police will have ceased to be corrupt and inefficient.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
8th Dec. 1902.

1663. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, in publishing a report of the trial of the Rajshahi Muharram cases by the Subdivisional Officer of Lalbagh, Murshidabad, to which district it was transferred by order of the High Court, says:—

"The most interested party in the matter is no doubt Mr. Ryan, who has been accused of an almost diabolical act. But where is he? He is in England, ten thousand miles away from this country! Indeed, it is a most strange thing that he should have been allowed to quietly leave India when such a grave charge was hanging over his head. The next important point is that Mr. Roe should so thoroughly identify himself with the cases. As a matter of fact, the Government Pleader, who appeared for the prosecution, cried piteously almost at every step that without instructions from Mr. Roe he could not enlighten the Court on many important points. In other words, Mr. Roe is acting as the proxy of Mr. Ryan."

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
8th Dec. 1902.

1664. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* reverts to the subject of the rejection by the present Criminal Bench of the High Court of the motions, revisions and appeals which have lately come before it, and, calculating the time the Hon'ble Judges were able to dispose of them, finds that their Lordships on Thursday and Friday last devoted only 16 and 18 minutes to each case. Within this short time, the *Patrika* wonders how the Hon'ble Judges were able to go through the explanation of the Lower Court as well as the record and listen to the arguments of Counsel for the defence and the Crown. It recommends the Chief Justice to whisper into the ears of his colleagues on the Criminal Bench the advice of the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Pratt to the Jury who were trying a case recently in the Sessions Court, that it is necessary that they should hear the whole case and all the evidence for the defence before they come to a verdict, and that they were not to form any hurried opinion when the liberty of the subject was at stake.

It reiterates its suggestion that an Indian Judge should be appointed on the Criminal Bench.

BENGALIEE,
9th Dec 1902.

1665. The *Bengalee* characterises the Chief Justice's appointment of Mr. Hechle, Attorney-at-Law, as Master of the High Court, in preference to Mr. N. Haldar, a Barrister-at-Law, who applied for the office, as a piece of downright jobbery. Mr. Hechle was enrolled as an Attorney in 1887, and almost immediately afterwards, that is, soon after his father's death, was

Mr. Hechle's appointment as
Master of the High Court.

given a Bench Clerkship; so that he can scarcely be said to have practised his profession at all, whereas, in England, under the Statutory Law, it is essential that an Attorney, if he is to be appointed to the office of Master, must be an admitted Attorney in *actual practice* of not less than five years' standing.

The *Bengalee* reminds the Chief Justice that some years ago he declared his "sympathy, nothing but unbounded sympathy," for the people of this country. Is it this "unbounded sympathy"—for Mr. Hechle—which led him to tell the Secretary of State that no competent member of the Bar could be found in Calcutta to accept this office?

(e)—*Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

1666. The *Hindoo Patriot* considers the Bengal Government's Resolution on the working of the Municipalities of Bengal (except Calcutta) during 1901-1902 a colourless document:—

HINDOO PATRIOT,
10th Dec. 1902.

"Both the Lieutenant-Governor and the Secretary are officiating incumbents, and it is as well that they refrain from saying anything pronounced that may handicap their permanent successors. Furthermore, Mr. E. W. Collin, the Officiating Secretary, is mentioned among others as a likely successor of Mr. Greer on the Calcutta Municipal Board when that gentleman is called to higher spheres of public usefulness, as he will probably be after the Coronation honours are bestowed. It would thus be doubly necessary to be careful, and the resolution under review is a masterpiece of the art of not saying that which one should have liked to say, but which will be said sure enough and in no uncertain voice."

1667. The same journal is disappointed with the Government Resolution on the Calcutta Municipality. The Corporation and the Government, it says, constitute a happy family, and it is not surprised that cordial acknowledgments have been made on all sides. In such circumstances, a note of discord could not possibly be expected to be struck, and "we accordingly find no indication of the many wants and grievances of the rate-paying and general public of which we have been accustomed to hear so much in the Indian as well as the Anglo-Indian Press, and which have now and again found a feeble echo in the proceedings of the Corporation on the questionings of Commissioners. Nor do we find anything about the perennially strained relation between the executive and the section of the Commissioners into whose hands power has necessarily gravitated, who succeed in defying the executive now and again, and who are running up expenditure and sanctioning reckless waste."

HINDOO PATRIOT,
12th Dec. 1902.

All unpalatable matters have been carefully expunged from the Report as from the Resolution, and one of the grievances, distantly mentioned by the Government, viz., the defective conservancy of the poorer parts of the city, should, in the opinion of the journal, have been emphasised and its immediate redress insisted upon. The difficulty about carts, bullocks and ponies, which is assigned as the reason for the defect in question, would never have existed if they had not been deliberately reduced and removed for the benefit of the "richer" parts. The *Patriot* holds that the Government is entirely mistaken in calling the defective parts "poor." Remove Bara Bazar, Colutola, Jorasanko and Jhorbagan from the Chowringhee Municipality tomorrow, and it will be seen which is the richer and which the poorer.

(h)—*General.*

1668. The *Moslem Chronicle* does not see any justification for Chittagong alone being made the port of embarkation for Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Burma, and enquires why other more convenient and accessible ports have not been selected. The journey to and the camp life at Chittagong are a source of great hardship to the pilgrims, who are further subjected to the annoyance of having to satisfy the authorities that they are possessed of sufficient money to perform the journey to Mecca and back. This is regarded as an unwarrantable interference and likely to lead to oppression and extortion.

MOSLEM CHRONICLE,
29th Dec. 1902.

The *Chronicle* further brings to light a complaint which it received by wire from the Hajis detained in the camp, that one Anderson lately committed an assault on the pilgrims. It appeals to the Viceroy, the Lieutenant-Governor and the Chief Secretary to look into the grievances of these pilgrims and to redress them.

BENGALIEE,
6th Dec. 1902.

1669. The *Bengalee* disapproves of the location of the new Subdivisional Court of Barrackpore within Cantonment limits and two miles from the Railway station. This will prove inconvenient to the bulk of the parties who coming from Khardah, Sodepur and Tittagarh, will have business before the Court. It trusts that it is not too late to rectify the mistake and select a site nearer the Railway station.

BENGALIEE,
6th Dec. 1902.

1670. The *Bengalee* says that whatever may be the explanation the authorities may have to offer with regard to the disaster, the Indian public will not be satisfied unless the officers to whose neglect and overzeal the catastrophe was due are brought severely to book. From the political point of view, the disaster is bound to have a serious effect on the minds of the Indian populace. They never took kindly to the inoculation operations, they viewed the process with the gravest suspicion, the worst motives were attributed, and if partly through the persuasion of their educated fellow-countrymen and partly through the hope of escaping the plague, they were getting used to the operations, the old feeling of suspicion will be deepened after this unfortunate incident.

BENGALIEE,
7th Dec. 1902.

1671. The *Bengalee* brings to notice that although one Tara Chand Kundu, of 226, Bow Bazar Street, Calcutta, deposited his income-tax and received the usual receipt therefor from the Income Tax Office on the 29th April last, some of his property were seized in virtue of an Inventory Notice dated the 3rd December 1902, for arrears of the tax. The journal hopes that the authorities will take prompt action, as it is simply unjust to make a man suffer for the mistake or whim of an Executive Officer of the Department.

INDIAN MIRROR,
9th Dec. 1902.

1672. The *Indian Empire* compares the condition of the Indian people under the present rule and under Akbar, and in spite of the inestimable blessings of British rule, is grieved to see that the people do not live a contented life, as was the case in Akbar's reign. This, it says, is due to the policy of distrust which prevails, and this policy should be discarded and one of sympathy substituted. Then and then only will the British Empire be firmly established in the hearts of the people.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
10th Dec. 1902.

1673. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* advances two objections to the forthcoming Coronation Darbar—its uselessness and its costliness. What results will Lord Curzon be able to show for the trouble and expense that the ceremony entails? Another objection, which is pronounced fatal, is the way in which the Darbar is being arranged. The Indians, far from crowning their Emperor, will be given no opportunity of taking a part in the function, "beyond finding the cost, that is all!"

INDIAN MIRROR,
11th Dec. 1902.

1674. The *Indian Mirror* questions the propriety of holding the Coronation Darbar at the present time when plague and famine are still ravaging the people whose condition does not permit of the enormous extravagance at which the Darbar is being arranged. Several of the Indian Princes who are spending so largely in the equipment of their camps at Delhi would do better to devote their money in combating the advances of plague and famine. Next to its costliness, the *Mirror* says there is the question of a not improbable outbreak of a dread epidemic of plague or some other disease. If the weather should prove inclement an epidemic is bound to break out. Finally, it reminds the reader that Delhi has evil traditions. A thousand years ago, as recorded in the *Mahabharat*, a Coronation Darbar was held there which was followed by a great war between the Kurus and the Pandavas. Where, again, is the throne of the Great Mogul of Delhi? And, lastly, the Delhi Darbar of 1877 was followed by a disastrous war with Afghanistan.

1675. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* observes that this case decided the

The case of the IXth Lancers.

question, who was the master of the country—the Government or the British Soldier? Luckily for India, says the journal, the destinies of the Empire are now in the hands of a proud and strong-minded personality. Any other ruler but Lord Curzon would have yielded to the circumstance. Fancy a British regiment to be punished? None but one with the strength of mind of a lion would have ventured to do it. But Lord Curzon refused to yield.

If the regiment had succeeded in defying the responsible rulers, the Empire would have been landed in anarchy and confusion, and the Government would have found it difficult to protect the Indians from the violence of evil-minded British soldiers.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
10th Dec. 1902.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

1676. The *East* exhorts the leaders of the National Congress who will

The National Congress.

assemble in Ahmedabad to show no spirit of opposition to the Government or to copy the tactics of the Irish. Such a course would only prove damaging to their own interests and those of the people they represent.

1677. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* writes that at the last Session of the

Ibid.

Indian National Congress held in Calcutta, the Punjab delegates came to the resolution that they would secede unless the Indian Congress Committee were revived. On the assurance of the President that the Committee still existed and that, at Nagpur, where a meeting was to be held, that body would elect the next President, select a site, frame resolutions, and transact other necessary business, the Punjabis held on. As this condition has been broken in regard to the election of Babu Surendra Nath Banerji as the next President, Babu Madan Gopal of Lahore has written to say that now, if the Punjabi delegates do not attend the Congress, they should not be blamed. Babu Madan Gopal advises the Congress leaders to open communication with such of their friends of the Congress in the Punjab who are vacillating and make an effort to win them over and keep the great national movement from perishing.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
8th Dec. 1902.

1678. In the opinion of the *Bengalee* the draft resolutions to be brought

The draft resolutions of the next
Indian National Congress.

forward at the Ahmedabad Congress have been framed with judicious care. On the subject of Education, which has been given the place of honour in the programme, the journal is confident that the Congress will send forth no uncertain sound, and the hope is expressed that Lord Curzon will not miss this golden opportunity of immortalising his administration by inaugurating educational reforms which would assist and not retard the progress and advancement of the nation.

BENGALUR,
2th Dec. 1902.

The next question relates to famine and the measures to be adopted to arrest it and promote the material welfare of the people. The Government, it holds, ought to welcome definite suggestions from the people's representatives on this subject and not resent them, as Lord Curzon's Government did in the matter of the suggestion thrown out by the Famine Union in England. This excellent suggestion for a typical village enquiry, will be reiterated by the Congress. The refusal to comply with it is the outcome not of a desire to find out the truth and the whole truth, but rather a determination to prevent the unpalatable truth from leaking out.

1679. With reference to the public meeting announced for Friday the

The Woodburn Memorial.

12th instant, to discuss the measures to be taken to raise a memorial to the late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, the *Bengalee* says that there can be no discussion of any measures to be taken, for the very simple reason that everything has been already cut and dried at the Royal Exchange. Not only this, but the form of memorial has been decided upon, viz., a statue and a portrait for Lady Woodburn.

BENGALUR,
6th Dec. 1902.

"Why not," says the journal "announce these facts also and show the world how cleverly public opinion can be made to order by the Chamber of Commerce? The whole affair is such a travesty of all that a genuine public tribute should be that we hesitate to comment further upon it. The amount

already collected is quite sufficient to relieve the general community of any necessity to add to it. As we have already said, let the Chamber of Commerce erect their memorial to the man who was more their servant than the master of Bengal, and let them persuade whomsoever zemindar they please into joining them: but let the public show their appreciation of the true inwardness of the movement by leaving it severely alone. By such means alone can they hope to retain the last shred of self-respect that is left to them in these days of reaction and extravagance."

INDIAN MIRROR,
5th Dec. 1902.

1680. The *Indian Nation* does not think Sir John Woodburn deserved a memorial, and remarks that it would be unfortunate if one raised by a small party were regarded

Ibid.

or described as a gift of the people of Bengal. Commemoration must be reserved for the heroic, and in the late Lieutenant-Governor the *Nation* discovered nothing heroic. It is ready to acknowledge that Sir John was a good suave gentleman, but, as for commemoration, it holds that Mr. Pennell and Mr. Beatson-Bell deserve a statue more than Sir John Woodburn.

A memorial taken in hand by the Chamber of Commerce and patronised by the Viceroy is however sure to be an accomplished fact some day. Whoever earns the goodwill of the Anglo-Indian community may make himself sure of a memorial. Whoever fails to earn it will go without that honour, whatever his services to the people, as for instance, Lord Ripon, Sir Richard Temple, and Mr. Cotton.

Precisely because the Government had done so little for Mr. Cotton, and the Anglo-Indian community had practically excommunicated him, it was incumbent on the people to demonstrate their appreciation of him. But what have they done? Now that the Chamber of Commerce is engaged upon a Woodburn Memorial, may not the people of Bengal make an effort to redeem their national honour by pressing on the movement for a Cotton Memorial that was begun sometime ago by an influential committee?

BENGALÉE,
9th Dec. 1902.

1681. The *Bengalée* continues to exhort its countrymen to stand aloof from the forthcoming demonstration which is to perpetuate the public services of Sir John

Ibid.

Woodburn as ruler of these Provinces. The public will have nothing but contempt for such Indians who, forgetful of the injury inflicted upon them by Sir John Woodburn's mischievous and retrograde enactment, which robbed them of the valued privilege of Local Self-Government in Calcutta, are yet prepared to adore his memory. To sing the praises of such a ruler is for the Indians to proclaim a falsehood and to degrade themselves in their own eyes and in the eyes of those who now seek their help.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
9th Dec 1902.

1682. While sympathising with the movement to raise a memorial to Sir John Woodburn and urging the Indians to muster strong at the forthcoming memorial meeting, the

Ibid.

Amrita Bazar Patrika makes excuses for the Indians if they fail to contribute much towards the necessary funds. They are unable to pay largely in view of what they have already contributed to objects of this description and which they will be called upon again to contribute in the future. It is for the Anglo-Indians to finance the scheme, since "that fine property, the Calcutta Municipality, was snatched from the hands of the Indian rate-payers and made over to them."

BENGALÉE,
10th Dec. 1902.

1683. The Indian Press having left the authorities in no doubt as to the attitude of Indian opinion in regard to the proposed Woodburn memorial, the *Bengalée* expresses its regret and surprise that the Viceroy

The Viceroy and the Woodburn Memorial.

should have placed himself at the head of the movement which has given rise to strong differences of opinion. His position as the representative of the Sovereign demands that His Excellency should stand aloof and permit the rival parties to settle their own differences in their own way, or reconcile the jarring conflicts of opposing factions. To vote a statue in honor of the ruler of a province, at a public meeting, and to subscribe to it is to stamp with the seal of public approbation the measures of his administration; and if this is done in the case of Sir John Woodburn, it would mean that the rate-payers of Calcutta approve of his policy and of that cardinal measure of his administration which sounded the death-knell of local self-government

in Calcutta. But the Indian rate-payer is not so obtuse as not to see the political significance behind the demonstration of Friday next. He will have nothing whatever to do with it and will resolutely stand apart from it, notwithstanding that His Excellency the Viceroy has identified himself with it.

It advises those who object to the movement not to attend the public meeting, as it disapproves of the proposal to move an amendment, for the matter relates to the memory of the dead, and Indian public opinion would strongly disapprove of any action which might seem to cast a slur upon the memory of the dead.

1684. The *Bengalee* advances another reason why His Excellency the Viceroy should have declined to take the chair at the Woodburn Memorial meeting. His presiding

Ibid.

BENGALÉE
11th Dec. 1902.

at such a meeting would be capable of but one interpretation. It would virtually constitute an indirect hint to all subordinate officials and wealthy Indian gentlemen to subscribe to the fund. It is because official connection with such movements is liable to be misconstrued that Indian Viceroys and Governors have hitherto very properly held themselves aloof. Not so Lord Curzon. Not once, nor twice, but several times has he converted the office of Governor-General into that of Collector-General of Subscriptions. By consenting to preside, says the journal, His Excellency has given an additional proof, if indeed such was needed, of his alacrity to meet the wishes of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

1685. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* cordially supports the proposition of the *Englishman* that instead of raising a statue to perpetuate the memory of Sir John Woodburn, it

The Woodburn Memorial.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
11th Dec. 1902.

would be better if a surgical ward were erected as an adjunct of the Medical College Hospital.

1686. After commenting on the attitude of complete indifference assumed by the Viceroy towards the administration of Bengal, which, until lately, when Mr. Bourdillon was put in to discharge the functions of warming

Lord Curzon and Sir Henry Cotton.

BENGALÉE,
11th Dec. 1902.

pan at Belvedere, was left for three months without a Lieutenant-Governor, the *Bengalee* endeavours to explain Lord Curzon's extraordinary failure to foresee and act. But it is yet possible, in its opinion, for His Excellency to retrieve the mistake he has made and to give the people of Bengal the Lieutenant-Governor of their choice, *viz.*, Sir Henry Cotton. It is a significant fact that Sir Henry's retirement has not yet been officially notified. The people of Bengal appeal to Lord Curzon to assert himself once more as he did in the case of the IXth Lancers, and 'to be just and fear not.'

1687. Referring to the Cotton Memorial, and its accomplishment without the aid of officialdom and the Chamber of Commerce, the *Bengalee* comments as follows:—

The Cotton Memorial.

BENGALÉE,
12th Dec. 1902.

"Here, at any rate, is an instance of a genuine public testimonial to a really good man and a controversion of the statement made by one of our contemporaries the other day that whoever fails to earn the goodwill of the Anglo-Indian community must go without the honour of a memorial, whatever his services to the land in which he has spent his official life. Will His Excellency Lord Curzon and His other Excellency Sir Patrick Playfair kindly take note?"

OFFICE OF THE INSPR.-GENERAL
OF POLICE, L. P.,
WRITERS' BUILDINGS,

The 13th December 1902.

H. B. ST. LEGER,

Asst. to the Insp.-General of Police, L. P.

